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THE AUSTRALIAN U.F.O. BULLETIN

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THE AUSTRALIAN U.F.O. BULLETIN.

C O N T E N T S

E.I.'s alive in space.
E.I. - The way they may contact us.
The Falcon Lake Incident.
UFO'S may be real, admits Russia.
Victorians report a UFO.
Film plan on missing aircraft.
On the UFO trail.
In the event.
Fredrick Valentich, update - as published in the MUFON Journal
103 Oldtowne Road, Seguin, Texas.

March - 1983.

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E D I T O R I A L.

We recently experienced a spate of sightings which the late Prof. J.E.McDonald would probably have called D L's (damn lights). Unfortunately, these lights did nothing except fly across the sky at fair speed and until they do something unusual, such as stopping in their tracks, back tracking, chasing cars or abducting people, they remain in the file of U.F.O.'s until they become I.F.O's (identified flying objects).

Of the hundreds of UFO sightings reported each year, about 80% are explainable as natural phenomena but that other 20% is what keeps the UFO pot boiling.

However, this recent batch came at a time when one of the Russian satellites - Cosmos 1402 - was malfunctioning and attempts were being made to jettison the nuclear fuel tank. The tank was ejected, and now there were three main parts, two of which were clearly visible over various areas of Australia.

With numerous fragments following, two of the sections, travelling on a similar trajectory, but with one much further to the east, were reported from Southern South Australia to New Guinea and from Southern Victoria to Queensland.

Some reports described a "fireball", "a greenish object spewing out bits of sparks" or "a silver object".

After the Media coverage, which literally left the conclusion "up in the air", it seemed most people assumed these were either meteorites or space junk, as all were reported within the time period Cosmos was logged to pass over Australia.

These sightings are typical of satellite re-entry cases and as far as V.U.F.O.R.S. is concerned, are I.F.O's - Identified Flying Objects!

E.T.'s Alive in Space, says NASA -

by John F. Schuessler, P.O. Box 58485, Houston,
Texas, 77258-8485.

E.T., the creature from outer space whose plight tugged the heartstrings of millions of Americans at this summer's biggest movie hit, may really exist, says a leading adviser to NASA.

"I'd have to say the evidence is now very compelling that other life does exist", admitted Dr. Cyril Ponnamperna, a top NASA scientist with the Laboratory of Chemical Evolution at the University of Maryland. "If you ask me what such creatures might look like, the best answer I could give is that they'd probably be very similar to E.T. in the movie. The large head and brain area would indicate high intelligence. And it would be sensible to have two large eyes, and not just one, for stereoscopic vision.

The color of the skin would probably depend on the environment he came from, and so would the size and shape of his body. I don't think we should be too surprised at all if we landed on another planet and a little fellow like this came over and put his hand out in greeting. "

One reason Dr. Ponnamperna believes extraterrestrial life could exist is because of recent discoveries he has made analyzing debris from outer space. In Meteorites the scientist has found frozen in time the origins of life as we know it - the amino acids that evolved into chemical forms.

"When you find these same chemicals in meteorites that have traveled millions of light years across time and space, it's not hard to imagine that creatures could exist somewhere out there. The presence of these biological compounds in meteorites indicate that a process was going on which could produce forms of life", he said. We found both purines and pyrimidines in the meteorite samples. These are the essential basis of DNA and RNA - the chemicals which carry the genetic codes to build human and animal life on earth."

However, Dr. Ponnamperna thinks that like E.T., any life forms that may exist will come from galaxies far away deep in space.

"From what we have found with space probes in our own solar system, it will be very unlikely we will encounter life here. But we have a whole universe out there, and it is mind-boggling just how many planets there could be with intelligent life.

If life did evolve on these planets, they could be 1,000 years, or even a million years more advanced than our own. They may even be trying to contact us or monitoring us right now".

NOTE:

On February 9th, John Schuessler spoke at the Dallas Brooks Hall. Unfortunately, we did not know of this arrangement until we received a letter from Mr. Schuessler a few days before his arrival in Melbourne, which was too late for our December edition. John mentioned that he wanted to meet the VUFORS Committee, together with Guido Valentich and Rev. Gill. We alerted those concerned and Guido had an hour visit with Mr. Schuessler. Members who were present at the Hall were disappointed that this knowledgeable Ufologist was not allowed more time on the floor.

E.T. - The way They May Contact Us, in a Big Way -

by G.A. Hume, Perth UFO Research Group.

If any still believe that most they watch on TV has any relation to what happens in real life, they should take note of the statement by NASA as regards a situation that might arise if a little boy were to befriend an E.T. as in the film doing record business these days. In real life, says NASA, according to a sub-editorial in "The Australian" entitled "E.T. won't like this", a boy would be fined \$5000 and could even be liable to jail.

If we were really civilized we would have our governments issue a statement something like this, and have it well publicised - "In the event of an E.T. becoming stranded through misadventure on this planet it is advised that those befriending such E.T. should immediately contact the minister for Extra-Terrestrial Affairs and every provision will be made to see that the visitor is made comfortable while undergoing the necessary medical examination and passing through the required quarantine period".

Unfortunately, we don't have such a minister - yet; and one can understand the feelings of aliens faced with the prospect of what might happen if they did land openly in this day and age.

Which brings me to the title of the article, and how they may contact us, that is if they have anything to tell us from which we may benefit. The obvious answer seems to me to be via radio and television which would involve them in no risk. If they can visit us in space vehicles it is certain they would have the technology to do this. When the time comes it would take us completely by surprise, but the shock would not be as severe as if flying saucers were to land simultaneously. So don't be surprised if you hear an announcement from your TV one day "We interrupt this programme to bring you an important message from extra-terrestrial sources!"

UFORUM

Disappointment is very high with the writer of this column! Very few people have written in with questions and that's what this column is all about. It's your communication, if you like, with the society. So many of you cannot get to our meetings, where many questions are asked, that we hoped you would use this arena. Names and addresses are never used in the column. We welcome questions from children and adults alike about any aspect of ufology or space that interests you.

Please write to : UFORUM, V.U.F.O.R.S., P.O.Box 43,
Moorabbin. Vic. 3189.

DON'T FORGET YOUR SUBS!

THE FALCON LAKE INCIDENT ... Part 3 by Chris Rutkowski

(Continued from December issue by permission of Charles Bowen, Editor of the English Flying Saucer Review).

We saw, in the first part of this article, how Stephen Michalak, from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, claimed that on May 20, 1967, he had suffered burns when he encountered a strange UFO which landed on a rocky outcrop near Falcon Lake, a resort close by the boundary between Manitoba and Ontario. In the second part of the article, the various effects - physical, radiation and physiological -- were discussed.

The Mayo Clinic

In August of 1968, Michalak went to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. The purpose of his visit was to undergo tests to determine exactly what was ailing him, as the doctors in Winnipeg appeared to be unhelpful. It is worthy of note that Michalak paid for the Mayo tests entirely on his own, as Medicare would not cover such a trip. He went and stayed at a hotel near the hospital, walking across each day and entering as an outpatient. He reported that he was given a thorough physical and psychological examination by various doctors, then sent home.

But, the problems began. Michalak has bills from the Clinic made out to "Mr. S. Michalak" and also his registration card. He waited for several weeks, but received no word on his results. The CAPRO investigators appealed to APRO for help, and a medical consultant sent a letter to the Mayo Clinic, asking for the medical reports. In reply, he was sent the now-famous "letter of denial", which bluntly said that Michalak had never been registered there, and that they didn't know anything about him.

This immediately spurred the shouts of "cover-up!" from individuals who learned of the letter, and rightly so. However, medical ethics is a very serious concern, and few realise the "red tape" which has been set up for both the protection of the doctor and the patient. There is a very great danger in releasing confidential files to unauthorized personnel (and this applies, obviously, to other fields as well, including ufology). Another letter to the Mayo Clinic was sent, this time accompanied by a release form signed by Michalak.

The reports came immediately, Michalak had been found to be in good health, but with neurodermatitis and simple syncope (fainting spells due to sudden cerebral blood pressure losses). The syncopes were suggested as having to do with hyperventilation or impaired cardiac output. This is interesting, as Michalak has indeed had heart problems within the past few years.

The psychiatric report showed that despite the usual generalizations normally assigned to individuals giving a detailed UFO encounter story, there was no other evidence of delusions, hallucinations or other emotional disorders. It seems that there was nothing wrong with Michalak. He had no ailment directly related to an encounter with a UFO.

The investigations

Michalak called the 'Winnipeg Tribune' late Saturday afternoon of the holiday long weekend. It was not surprising that no one would help him then. But, the next evening (May 21, 1967), Heather Chisvin, a 'Tribune' reporter, interviewed Michalak for the first time. She was the first one to talk with him about his experience, and her article must be considered as the first account, uninfluenced by later documentation.

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The first investigator on the scene, however, was Barrie Thompson, who had read the account in the newspaper, and immediately contacted Michalak. Thompson's investigation, on behalf of APRO, began the series of civilian UFO investigations. Michalak notes that "after hearing my story, he stated his belief that the craft was not an earthly creation". Michalak praised Thompson on several occasions, as "he was the first person who took my story seriously".

Soon the Michalak household was in turmoil. Calls came in at all hours of the day or night, people dropped in at any time, and letters poured in.

The CAPRO investigations included taking Michalak to get a body radiation count, and encouraging him to take other tests. One misleading bit of information said that Michalak had been to a clinical hypnotist and that he had been hypnotically regressed. While both statements are true, the clinical hypnotist had in fact only interviewed Michalak and not put him under. A tape of Michalak's hypnosis is in existence, however, but the session was conducted, apparently, by an amateur, who was a reporter for the 'Winnipeg Free Press' at the time.

The Royal Canadian Air Force investigations were under the direction of Sqdn.Ldr. P. Bissky, who came to the conclusion that the case was a hoax. He recently remarked that the RCAF conclusions were all available in Ottawa for perusal. Indeed, some documents are contained in the DND files, and have been obtained by several ufologists. A rather carefully-worded statement is in the National Research Council's Non-Meteoric Sightings File, DND 222, saying, "Neither the DND, nor the RCMP investigation teams were able to provide evidence which could dispute Mr. Michalak's story."

Royal Canadian Mounted Police analysis from its forensic laboratory was "unable to reach any conclusion as to what may have caused the burn damage" to Michalak's clothing.

A theory came out, suggesting that the radiation found at the site might have been caused by radium paint, possibly from someone scraping a watch dial around the site. This is interesting. Was this just a candid comment, or did it suggest that there was a truly abnormal level of Ra226 at the site at the time? If so, why was it not detected in recent soil analyses?

The Government covers up?

Apart from the Mayo Clinic "cover-up", the Canadian Government seemed to refuse access to information on the incident in 1967. On June 29, 1967, it was reported that Mr. Ed. Schreyer, then an MP, asked about UFO investigations in the Commons. The Speaker of the House "cut off the subject without government reply". On November 6, 1967, Defence Minister, Leo Cadieux, stated that "it is not the intention of the Department of National Defence to make public the report of the alleged sighting". This was in response to requests by several cabinet members to obtain information on the incident. On November 11, 1967, it was reported that Mr. Schreyer formally placed a written question on the Commons order paper seeking information on UFO's.

The closed-mouth attitude of the government was not ignored by the press, which printed several comments about it. About the case, one editor noted: "The attempt to keep it concealed can have only one effect - it will give the UFO Legend another boost". Of course, he was precisely correct. On Oct. 14, 1968, House Leader Donald MacDonald again refused an MP, this time Mr. Barry Mather, access to reports on the Michalak case.

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However, on February 6, 1969, Mather was given permission by a member of the Privy Council to examine their file on UFO's "from which a few pages have simply been removed". It was reported that outright release of the file "would not be in the public interest", and create a dangerous precedent that would not contribute to the good administration of the country's business.

Bondarchuk (1979) reports that "portions of the complete government report are available for public scrutiny" at the NRC in Ottawa. However, "noticeably missing are the RCMP study of the burned items, as well as the government's final conclusion, if indeed one exists.

Psychological effects

Mention of the psychological aspects of the Michalak case must be made. Why, for example, did Michalak call a newspaper office for assistance? This one piece of evidence alone has served to convince some individuals that the case was a hoax and that Michalak was only looking for publicity.

By the time Michalak made it back to his motel, he was exhausted. In his own words:

"I did not go inside the motel for fear of contaminating people around me....I felt detached from the rest of the world...The pain was unbearable...the odour seemed to come from within me, and I could not escape it...I was afraid that I had ruined my health and visualized the resulting hell should I become disabled...my mind centred on the possible consequences. "There had to be some way of getting medical attention...I thought of the press. Things that happened to me were definitely news, if nothing else...I did not want to alarm my wife, or cause a panic in the family. I phoned her as a last resort, telling her that I had been in an accident..."

Michalak felt that it was his "duty" to report the incident, and was initially unafraid of ridicule. However, since then, he and his family have become somewhat defensive about the incident, and get irritated to hear of sceptical accounts in print. Indeed, it is this writer's personal impression that Michalak is a very sincere individual. Also, psychiatrists could not find any evidence of emotional or mental illness in the man.

The hoax?

Would Michalak have gone to so much trouble to perpetrate a hoax? There is no question that he became seriously ill, and even today displays some effects. If we can assume that Michalak burned himself while concocting his hoax, would he have then repeatedly pursued medical assistance and go to the Mayo Clinic to make it look good? One physics professor at the University of Manitoba, now deceased, believed that Michalak was experimenting with toy rockets, which exploded due to mishandling. He also suggested that he was amateurishly trying to hit two chunks of uranium together to make a homemade bomb. The grid-like pattern on his body was caused by the grill he was using as a support. This totally unfounded theory ignored most of the known facts of the case.

An RCAF spokesman is convinced that Michalak was drunk and had fallen on a barbeque grill (one immediate objection to this is that such an act would give exactly the reverse impression of burns actually found on Michalak's body).

Menzel's impression has already been related, claiming the case to be a hoax because Michalak could not find the site when with the Condon investigators.

Ray Craig, the Condon Committee's investigator, concluded that : "If (Michalak's) reported experience were physically real, it would show the existence of alien flying vehicles in our environment". He noted "inconsistencies and incongruities", and said that even with some of the other evidence associated with the case, he would have to stick to his "initial conclusion",

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namely that "this case does not offer probative information regarding unconventional(sic) craft".

Despite this apparently negative conclusion, the index of the report lists the case as an unexplained sighting.

Craig found reason to question that the metal samples found by Michalak and Hart would have been missed by early investigators at the site. Stewart Hunt of the Department of Health and Welfare described his examination of the area as "a thorough survey", using three different radiation counters. It is definitely odd that the metal chunks were not found until a visit to the site a year later. Thompson remarked that the samples were deeply buried inside the crack in the rock, and that some effort was expended in getting them out. He also remarked that most of the radiation detected was inside the fissure.

Bondarchuk mentions that a close scrutiny of early soil samples showed that small silver particles were present, citing this as a reason to eliminate the theory that someone "planted" the silver bars. However, this is not conclusive as native silver particles occur naturally in the area in small amounts, and their presence in the soil samples does not eliminate the possibility of "planting".

Cannon also mentions this information, and that radium 226 was present in both the soil and metal covering. This apparently was considered as a prime reason to negate the watch dial theory. Attempts to locate the CAPRO analyses have not been successful.

There is no doubt, though, that the metal samples are very suspicious. They even had an obvious "seam" which tended to suggest fabrication, as if someone moulded the silver in a definite shape. Did Michalak produce these himself? Or, did someone else produce them, and plant them at the site? If so, why? Even without the metal samples, the case was a significant one, needing no support. In fact, the samples tend only to confuse the case. But an amateur UFO "buff" would probably not have realized this, and thought only that the samples would enhance the case. Since the case attracted many such individuals, it would be difficult to determine whom this might have been.

Another theory would involve the "cover-up" scenario, and have the government fabricate the sample themselves. However, evidence for this idea would be difficult to obtain and essentially impossible to prove. If true, this would raise the question of why the government would deliberately enhance the case and then create an aura of secrecy, lending themselves to suspicion. Other hoax theories can be postulated, but all need the necessary proof, including a motive for their devices.

Conclusions

There is no question that something very unusual occurred on May 20, 1967, north of Falcon Lake. There is no question that Stephen Michalak came back from his prospecting trip badly burned and seriously ill, claiming that he had encountered a strange craft. But is the account true? Can this case be effectively proved beyond a shadow of a doubt? The evidence includes the following: 1) an eyewitness account of a vehicle behaving in ways not attributable to conventional craft. 2) physiological damage to the witness, the mechanism of which is not immediately obvious. 3) a visible "landing site", consisting of a ring of loose soil, containing a bare patch of rock.

Does this prove that an alien craft landed near Falcon Lake? Unfortunately not. Major problems include the metal samples found at the site and the radium detected (was it in evidence in different samples?). Clearly, the investigations at the time were varied but at the same time were confused, and several bits of information are lacking. All of the CAPRO investigators agreed that Michalak was a very sincere individual, and detected no effort on his part to fabricate the account. This writer found this to be true from his own interviews with Michalak, and found no reason to doubt his veracity.

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If we assume that Michalak's story is truthful (and we have no reason immediately obvious to suppose otherwise), then we have a solid report of a landed UFO, complete with physical and physiological effects. What could it have been?

Keel (1975) suggested that Michalak was a victim of a "game" played by ultraterrestrials, wanting to confuse him in his attempt to locate the site.

Bondarchuk (1979) a proponent of the ETH, describes his analysis by saying that Michalak was burned by "an intelligently guided craft of unconventional structure and of unknown origin". He, too, finds evidence of a government intervention in the case. He also observes that the publication of Michalak's book, which to some suggests a hoaxer's methods, was financially not a successful venture, and the experience proved to be costly to Michalak rather than a boon. This writer is hesitant to give a final evaluation to the case. Personal interviews with the Michalaks have shown them to be sincere people, and not prone to irrational acts. They are intelligent, level-headed individuals, and well-read on many subjects. Their annoyance at their notoriety is apparent, and their defensiveness at further proddings show that they have been subjected to severe ridicule and criticism since the incident first hit the media in 1967.

Investigations are continuing. If officials were convinced Michalak was a hoaxer, why was he not prosecuted for public mischief? Was there no definite evidence towards this end? It certainly would have been an interesting court case, arguing about the existence of UFOs. I think Michalak would have won.

Epilogue

Today, over thirteen years after his experience, Michalak remains convinced he had encountered something he wasn't supposed to see. His convictions are firmly entrenched. He has read several books about UFOs since 1967 and is still frustrated by not knowing what happened to him. He has been to Carman, Manitoba, where "Charlie Redstar" was a nightly spectre over that town for many months, and heard stories from witnesses of their own experience. In this writer's experience with UFO investigation, he has found that many UFO witnesses see more than one in a lifetime. That is, if a person sees one UFO, he or she will probably see another at a later time in their life. This is the "repeater" phenomenon which is considered to be an indication of insincerity in witnesses by several ufologists. This author is in disagreement with that belief, as the UFO phenomenon suggests a close link with the individual witness's psyche, possibly involving an "awareness threshold". While this may not be empirically proven or testable, theoretical ufology can only draw on apparent relationships, and there exists some evidence to indicate an association between a witness and the "perceived" UFO.

In this regard, it is interesting to note that Michalak has reported another UFO sighting. It occurred in north-western Ontario several years ago, while standing near a lake. He said that he observed "The same thing" as he had seen at Falcon Lake, though at a much greater distance from him, flying through the sky. Are "they" keeping an eye on him? Or is Michalak simply one of those people who is now encouraged to look skyward for unusual things? The mystery continues.

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UFO's MAY BE REAL, ADMITS RUSSIA ...

MOSCOW (AAP) : A Soviet newspaper said today Unidentified Flying Objects could exist. It said a Soviet fighter plane had a brush with a mystery object two years ago.

The weekly Sovietskaya Kultura said there still were many unexplained phenomena behind various "flying saucer" reports and urged scientists to collect and collate as much information as possible on the subject.

Many senior Soviet scientists "do not deny that such phenomena could be connected with extra-terrestrial civilisation" the newspaper said, adding that among them was a corresponding member of the elite Academy of Science.

In an example of recent strange happenings in the Soviet Union itself, the report said a fighter plane encountered a "fiery ball" five metres in diameter, in 1981.

Damage:

The ball had travelled in front of the craft for some distance "as if measuring its speed" and had then passed through it, exploding as it reached the tail and causing structural damage.

Scientists had at first assumed the phenomenon was ball lightning, but the damage to the plane did not tally with this, and lightning would not be able to move in the same direction as the fighter, the newspaper said.

It also revealed that the Soviet Union was working on plans for a long-distance unmanned space mission in order to try to track down signs of civilisation on distant planets.

Credit: "News" Adelaide, S.A.

VICTORIANS REPORT A UFO - (Credit: "Times" Canberra, ACT. 16th Jan. 1983.

MELBOURNE: An unidentified flying object was reported crossing the sky above Victoria shortly after 6 pm on Friday, according to a Federal Department of Transport spokesman. Sightings came from south-eastern Melbourne suburbs, Moorabbin Airport, south-east of Melbourne, and Shepparton, 180 kilometres to the north. The department spokesman said the object was sighted in the north-eastern sky.

An air-traffic controller at Moorabbin Airport reported the object as being "bright silver" at first but changing colour to green and red as it headed further north. A spokesman for the Federal Government committee monitoring space objects said there was "little chance" the object was the Russian satellite Cosmos which passes over Australia four times a day. The satellite was scheduled to pass over South Australia and Queensland at 6.30 pm but should not have been visible from Victoria.

"The Government is confident that if there was any change in the Cosmos orbit the United States would notify Australia", he said. Calls reporting sightings began soon after 6 pm.

Melbourne airport flight-service officer Mr. Joe White said, "I was sitting at my flight-service console and I just saw it in the background out of the window. It was heading downwards at a steep angle, about 80 degrees, but disappeared from sight before it reached the ground. It was bright green and had a tail of light behind it which was also a green colour".

The senior operations controller at Tullamarine Airport, Mr. Brian Whiteley, said the object did not show up on radar screens and a check confirmed that no aircraft were missing.

Continued....

"We contacted the RAAF and have reported it as an unidentified flying object", he said.

An officer at Tidbinbilla Deep Space Communications Centre in Canberra said that no NASA station around the world had reported any satellite coming down.

The president of the Victorian UFO Research Society, Mrs. Judith Magee, said reports of sightings died down yesterday and she felt it had been the Cosmos satellite.

FILM PLAN ON MISSING AIRCRAFT

Credit : "Times" Canberra, A.C.T. 12 th Jan. 1983.

MELBOURNE: A Melbourne film producer, Mr. Ron Cameron, wants to make a documentary about a light aircraft which disappeared over Bass Strait more than four years ago.

Its disappearance had sparked speculation of UFO involvement because the pilot, Mr. Frederick Valentich, had said in his last radio message that strange metallic objects were following him.

Mr. Cameron said two divers had found the wreckage of the single-engined Cessna which had disappeared on October 21, 1978. They had offered to sell him photographs of the wreckage "for a large sum".

A spokesman from the Department of Aviation said yesterday that there was no proof the wreckage and pictures were genuine.

*** ** *

'UFO PLANE PHOTOS' UPSET FATHER.....

Credit : "The Sun", Melbourne. 11th Jan. 1983.

Mr. Guido Valentich is upset that two men, who claim to have photographs of his missing son's plane, want to sell them for \$10,000.

Frederick Valentich, then 20, disappeared on October 21, 1978, while flying a blue and white single-engined Cessna in Bass Strait.

A radio message from the man soon before he disappeared mentioned strange metallic objects hovering and following him. It sparked an as-yet unsolved UFO mystery.

Mr. Valentich said yesterday: "It is disappointing that these people try to sell such things when they haven't got the dignity or the courtesy to come along and show them to me. It indicates they are so cold-hearted that they don't care about people's feelings."

Mr. Ron Cameron, an independent film producer who intends to salvage the plane and make a documentary on the mystery, confirmed that two men - both divers - had offered to sell him the photos and the plane's position.

Continued.....

ARE YOUR SUBS DUE?

CHANGE OF ADDRESS? ...DON'T FORGET TO TELL US.

U.F.O. EXHIBITION 1983 - If you missed out on the October Exhibition, you will still have the opportunity to catch up on the latest information VUFORS is to hold another exhibition on the 12th March, at 9 Victoria Street, Melbourne, between the hours of 11a.m. and 4p.m. Bring your questions and friends.

Donation - \$1. at the door.

He said they wanted "a large sum" for the photos, which had yet to be authenticated. Mr. Cameron said the photos were clear and showed an empty cockpit.

"The plane was a little bit twisted, but it's still in one piece", he said. "Once we get a line down to it we will be able to bring it to the surface in half a day".

Mr. Cameron, like the Valentich family, believes a UFO was involved in Frederick Valentich's disappearance.

MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE!

T-SHIRTS AND WINDCHEATERS ARE NOW AVAILABLE ...Your Society is now having emblems printed on T-Shirts and Windcheaters. The T-shirts are top quality Poly/Cotton, Australian made. Windcheaters are Exacto brand.

These garments would make an ideal gift for your family or friends. The T-shirts come in white with emblem on the left chest; windcheaters are navy blue.

Cost of T-shirts is \$7.50

Post per T-shirt - Victoria 90c; Interstate \$1.00.

Cost of Windcheaters is

Childrens - size 24-32 : \$13.00

Womens - " 34-40 : \$15.75

Mens - " 42-46 : \$16.90

Post per Windcheater - Victoria \$1.30; Interstate \$1.50.

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Please allow 40 days to process your order.

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VUFORS, P.O. Box 43, Moorabbin. Vic. 3189.

It is arguably the overriding ambition of most members of UFO study groups or societies to be the personal witness of a UFO sighting; and it would probably be a "once in a lifetime" opportunity, so, IN THE EVENT, what would you do to permanently record the sighting and ensure, as far as currently possible, its credibility?

Obviously some kind of physical record is called for. These days it is possible to do this in many ways:

1. A still photograph
2. A cine movie film
3. A video tape cassette
4. A sound recording
5. Last, but not least, the enviable opportunity of a physical manifestation of its visit, and dare I say it, an actual piece of or from the craft.

However, for the purpose of this article, let's primarily concern ourselves with the most easily achievable, as far as the man in the street is concerned, a still photograph. With this in mind, we can divide the whole subject into two distinct headings:

- (a) Taking the Picture
- (b) Subsequent Security of the Picture

TAKING THE PICTURE

Obviously, the first consideration is to always, repeat ALWAYS have your camera with you, wherever you go, day or night. There is absolutely no use in having the camera unless it is also always loaded with film, as the time it would take you to load it, (and it always takes twice as long when you are in a hurry), the sighting may well have gone. Make a note of the type of film in the camera by sticking the end of the package or name of the film on the camera itself, NOT the case, as the two may get separated. If you can't remember to do this each time you change the film, then pre-set the film speed on your camera's automatic exposure dial. Some makes of camera do this automatically anyway, especially the 110 size cameras. Do not ever put the camera in your car glove box, as apart from the excess heat found in this location which will almost certainly have an adverse effect on the colour results of your film, the action of trying to open the glove box in a hurry can be most frustrating. Keep the camera next to you on the car floor, below the passenger seat. It will be easy to pick up, and let's face it, it can't fall any further and damage itself if you have to brake or accelerate hard.

Next, try to have all the camera controls pre-set in a "rule of thumb" condition. By this I mean, since it is highly unlikely that your sighting will be closer than 30 feet, you can ensure instant sharp focus with a high degree of safety by keeping the lens pre-focussed at INFINITY. You should use a fast shutter speed of between 250th and 500th sec. to try to eliminate both subject movement and camera shake, for pictures taken in bright daylight; about 125th to 250th sec. for sunrise or sunset; and no slower than 60th sec. for night shots, (so you will need to get into the habit of normally using a fairly fast (sensitive) film). Set the aperture close to or at the full aperture of your particular lens. If you have an automatic priority type camera, set the shutter speed and let the camera select the aperture. Make sure that the film is already wound on to the next frame and the locking device is cleared, so you don't have to fumble with that.

So, you are either walking with the camera around your neck or driving, and you sight something in the sky which you are unable to identify. If in the car, STOP. Do not attempt to take a picture from a moving vehicle, if for no other reason than the obvious danger being distracted from your driving, and your picture will almost certainly be blurred due to hand shake camera movement. Get out of the car altogether, you don't want any marks of dust or flare coming from your windscreen or side windows to give false impressions on your film. It is most unlikely that you will have the ideal, a tripod, so you need something to hold you steady. The most handy is the car itself, so either tuck yourself against the side or over the bonnet. Alternatively, quickly look for a fence, a tree, or even your passenger if you have one. If none of these is available, the best you can do is adopt a stance like the cops on T.V. when they are firing a pistol. Hold your breath as you "squeeze" the shutter button. If the object is moving, "pan", (follow), with it and keep moving in the same direction as you squeeze the shutter.

So, that's the actual taking of the picture; now, about the picture itself. In the heat and excitement of the moment it is not easy to think of other things than the object you are photographing. However, later on you need a great deal more data. Try, if possible, to include in the same picture as the object, some easily

cow or horse, and ideally, another person. All these have dimensions which fall into narrow size brackets and therefore may bear a relevance by comparison to the size of the object, and will also be an aid in matching colour prints, to ensure exact colour matching with the original. Try to assemble as much, albeit apparently irrelevant information and detail. The more the better, if only to establish for yourself an aura of credibility. It is far better to have too much detail and not need it, than to need a small fact and not have it.

All the following are either essential or helpful in establishing various aspects of your sighting:

1. The exact time of the day or night your picture was taken.
2. The exact day and date. This establishes the exact sun, planet or star positions for that time and date.
3. A compass bearing, i.e. the direction you were facing when you took the picture. If unable to work that out, try to establish the sun's or moon's position at that exact time.

Give a description of cloud layers and formations, and wind direction if any. A very good indication of speed of the object is if you slowly count off 1 and 2 and 3, (i.e. 3 seconds), between taking each shot in a series of 3 or more shots. This, compared with the aforementioned objects or background would give a good indication of speed of the object. This, of course, does not apply when taking movie film, in which the film is exposed at either a constant speed of 18 or 24 frames per second, and the amount of movement in relation to the background between each frame can be easily calculated. Taking movie film will be the subject of another article. Always use your standard lens. If a larger picture is required it is quite simple to enlarge that part of the negative at a later time, which, hopefully, will be quite sharp and well defined.

Do NOT use a flash at night. Apart from the fact that any light on close objects would tend to create a false impression of the local ambient lighting situation, it will also be completely useless in illuminating any objects over 30 feet away.

Now a couple of don'ts. Do NOT use a telephoto lens in order to get a close up. Using a hand held telephoto lens greatly increases the risk of hand and camera shake, resulting in a blurred outline of the object.

Take numerous shots. Film stock is relatively cheap in relation to the potential value of your pictures, and you may never get another chance, so write down the following technical details.

1. The film used and its exposure speed in either ASA or ISO and its negative size, i.e. 110, 35mm, 120 (whether $2\frac{1}{4}$ square, 6 x 7 or other)
2. The aperture setting and the shutter setting
3. The make and model of camera used, and the focal length of the lens which is important i.e. 45mm 50mm or 55mm etc.
4. Any filtration on the lens, even if only a U.V. (ultra violet)

SECURITY OF THE PICTURE

When the object has finally disappeared, rewind the film and IMMEDIATELY TAKE IT OUT OF THE CAMERA, and immediately replace it with a fresh unexposed roll of film. Then expose one or two frames of this new roll on nothing in particular. The reasoning behind this procedure is simply "Security", and I will go into this most important aspect in more detail in another article. However, it will suffice to say, that many a precious film has been saved from the claws of official confiscation by quick thinking and deft concealment of the actual negatives in question, when cameras have been either opened to fog the film or confiscated and their contents mysteriously "gone missing", later, lost in the system. If apprehended, endeavour to conceal the film taken from your camera, preferably somewhere outside, not in your car which is liable to be searched. Paranoid? Yes! But the history of UFO research is dominated by officialdom going to extreme lengths to try to hide the truth. Being one step ahead may pay dividends in the long run.

To Summarise:

1. Keep your camera with you at all times, loaded with film, on car floor or around your neck.
2. Pre-set camera controls, focus, shutter, aperture, film winder.
3. Get out of car and find some sort of anchorage.
4. Hold breath and squeeze shutter like firing rifle and pan with object.
5. Include easily recognisable objects in picture, especially another person.

6. Write down as much data on every aspect of both environment and technical facts as possible.
7. After object has gone, rewind film and remove it from camera. Replace with new roll, exposing 1 or 2 frames on anything.

All the above may seem rather a lot to remember. So, why not be prepared by trying a practice run. When next you are out for a drive and spot an aircraft, (conventional type that is), try out all I have said, and make into a habit so that all those details are followed automatically. Then, when the real thing happens to you, you will react without thinking and, hopefully, all will be well and you will end up with a world wide scoop.

If I can be of any help, advice or otherwise, please do not hesitate to contact me, through the secretary, and between us we may be able to come up with some incontrovertible evidence of the existence of UFO's, to the benefit of all concerned. Best of luck!

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***** ON THE U.F.O. TRAIL

by Paul Norman

After 45,000 miles, visiting investigators in 31 states, I reached one of my favourite haunts in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of Northern California.

Year after year I return to a friendly little town for a rest and trout fishing, just prior to my return to Australia.

On 19th July, 1982, the County Sheriff, a friend of several years, relayed a message of a UFO sighting which came in on the law reinforcement radio network. One witness described the sighting as an extremely bright white dome which expanded to 800 feet at the base and an intense light which moved erratically. The luminescence expanded to the part where the light began to dissipate. Another observer described the object moving at an extremely high rate of speed appearing to move through the phases of the moon from full to half, a quarter moon then back to full again.

From another angle an F.B.I. Agent estimated the object to be 1.000 feet long. All descriptions appeared to indicate an object which changed shape until it dissipated. This all sounds like an intriguing UFO sighting, the sort of incident that lit up the switchboards of Melbourne radio, T.V. and newspaper offices during the breaking up and re-entry period of the Russian Cosmos satellite 1402.

Likewise, the California sighting coincided with the launching of a satellite at Vandenberg Air Force Base, north of Santa Barbara.

During May, while on the UFO Trail in 1976, when visiting contacts at Vandenberg Air Force Base, colleague Judith Magee and I were permitted to view the launching of one of these spy satellites. It was fired into polar orbit far enough out over the Pacific at a safe distance from populated areas.

Until the booster is jettisoned, the missile does appear to change shape and color. Under the atmospheric conditions at the time of the July 19, 1982 sighting, the satellite was viewed from towns in the mountains of Northern California over 100 miles away. A disappointing change from a UFO to an IFO on the UFO Trail.

OMEGA NAVIGATIONAL STATION.

One of our members, David Peacock, has arranged a tour of the station for Friday 4th March. We know it is very short notice, but if anyone is interested and available that day, David can be contacted on 795.5859 between 2pm - 5p.m. Wednesday or Thursday.

FREDERICK VALENTICH ENCOUNTER: UPDATE

By Paul Norman (© 1982, Paul Norman)

One night in November 1953, I was called outside my home to observe an unidentified flying object approach and hover over a power station in Tennessee. That same month, two military airmen were sent in pursuit of a mysterious flying object. They never returned.

Little did I dream that nearly three decades later I would be involved, with colleagues, in the greatest mystery in Australian aviation history.

During the evening of October 21, 1978, 20-year-old Australian pilot Frederick Valentich disappeared over Bass Strait while flying from Melbourne's Moorabbin Airport to King Island, off the coast of Victoria. His disappearance occurred at 1912:28 hrs., during the peak of the largest UFO flap in Australian history.

Over 3½ years after that fatal Saturday evening, no trace has ever been found of either the pilot or his Cessna 182 aircraft.

During my travels and correspondence, I have found many false stories circulating around the world regarding this most important case. I have found these inaccurate statements are coming from individuals at home and abroad, who live hundreds of miles from the scene where the action took place, newcomers to the field, newsmen who have tried to give the incident their own twist from their limited knowledge of the known details, and last but not least, from individuals of the scientific community who have concocted a preconceived theory and have tried to make their ideas fit around it.

Those researchers who are familiar with the outstanding Larry Coyne case (Oct. 1973 UFO encounter over Ohio by Army Reserve helicopter crew) will recognize that the Frederick Valentich description follows generally the same pattern as that of Larry Coyne's helicopter crew. That startling encounter took place 5 years prior to the Valentich encounter over Bass Strait. The object in each case was described as cigar or long shape,

displayed the same maneuverability, hovering characteristics, and the green light. Larry Coyne and his crew got back to tell their story—Frederick Valentich didn't.

Frederick Valentich was not the only person who reported a strange object in the sky over Bass Strait that day and night. His ears were not the only ears that heard strange sounds that day and night. Researchers have found over 50 reported sightings of UFOs around Bass Strait which occurred before, during, and after the Valentich disappearance. Most of this information would never have been found but for the work of researchers from the Victorian Research Society (VUFORS) based at Moorabbin, the location from whence the mysterious flight started.

This incident was at first treated as an ordinary lost aircraft case. However, the difficulty in keeping details of this disappearance hidden was because several other pilots flying at the same time were tuned to the same radio frequency. The world first learned that a UFO was involved when one of those pilots tipped-off the press.

We first heard of the UFO involvement on the following day, October 22nd. I immediately phoned Judith Magee, who is President of the Victorian UFO Research Society in Victoria. We had been members of the Moorabbin Aero Club for several years. Judith is a former airline hostess with a wide acquaintance of pilots and familiar with the language in aviation circles. She was the logical person to go probing aviation personnel for information.

We were the first members to arrive in the dining room and order our meals. When the waitress returned to the table, Judy asked, "What is all this talk about a UFO/aircraft chase?" The waitress replied, "yes, they had a meeting with some of the pilots. They were told not to divulge anything." We heard later that some of those pilots were flying at the time of the encounter.

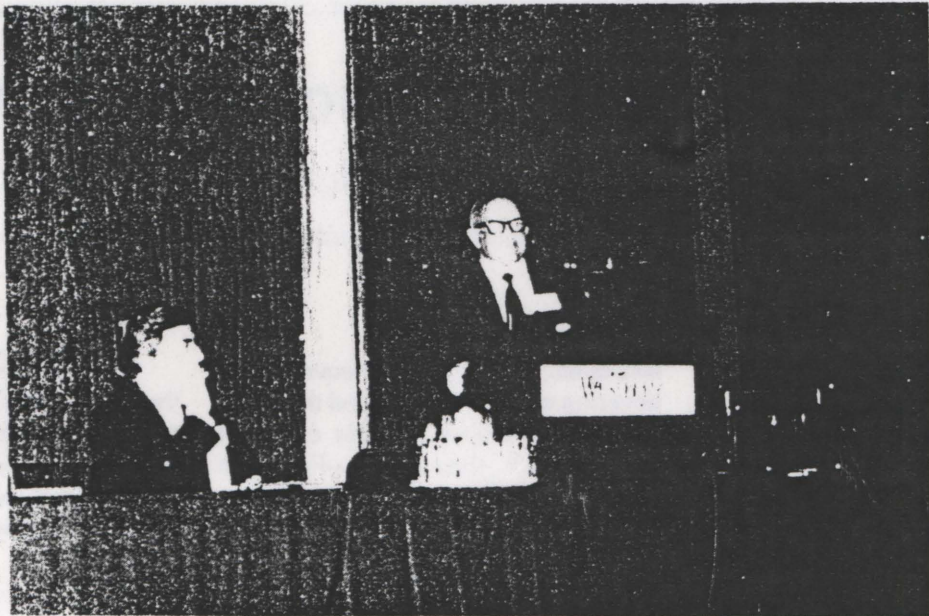
As the people began to gather, there were all sorts of rumors, stories, and speculation, such as hoax, suicide, secret military mission, stolen aircraft, the pilot had become disorientated, he had joined drug runners or had been murdered, etc. All these have been proven to be incorrect, unfounded, or beyond the scope of this young man.

I waited for the appearance of two pilots with whom we had discussed the subject many times. They both had previous encounters and were interested in similar cases. Finally, one of the pilots came in and took his seat at the bar. I walked up to him and before I opened my mouth he waved his hand and said, "I don't know a damned thing." He hasn't discussed UFOs with me since.

The next morning (Monday) when newspapers came out all over Australia and the world, for that matter (although overseas headlines were not as pronounced), "Box Car" front-page headlines led the news of the day.

About 9 a.m. I went over to Judy's home where the main VUFORS phone is located. She met me at the door with the remark, "I'm glad you came, this phone has been ringing off the hook since six o'clock and I've got other work to do." VUFORS telephones kept ringing for three days, almost constantly. People were wanting to report sightings of 10, 15, and 20 years ago, but we were trying to keep the lines clear for current reports. To complicate matters, some members of the press were demanding all the answers before we had the opportunity to investigate.

The Bass Strait flap had been building up for over 6 weeks prior to the Valentich disappearance. UFO activity reached a peak that very weekend of October 21, 1978. Frederick Valentich was not the only person who reported a UFO on that day. Hundreds of people reported dozens of UFOs that same day and night. More daytime sightings were reported that day than in any flap we have ever investigated. Many of these reports have been published in the VUFORS publication *Australian UFO Bulletin*, the *MUFON UFO*



Paul Norman recounts pilot disappearance case

Journal, The International UFO Reporter, the APRO Bulletin, and other UFO publications throughout the world.

One of the first attempts to debunk the encounter came from an official spokesman. "The pilot had been flying upside down and had seen his reflection in the water." This hastily presented "explanation" immediately backfired. The fuel tanks of a Cessna-182 are located in the wings and the gasoline flows to the engine by gravity. There is no fuel pump in this type of airplane. It will not fly upside down for more than 50 seconds.

Speculation that the sound was of the aircraft crashing into the water is incorrect. Due to the curvature of the earth, the radio could not have been heard by Melbourne Flight Service controller, had the Cessna been at sea level. Neither would a crash last for 17 seconds, which was the duration of the strange noise.

Attempts were made to manipulate public opinion that the pilot was not where he reported his position. Wrong again! Witnesses camped along the Packer River, 5 miles east of the Cape Otway lighthouse, observed his blue and white Cessna turn toward King Island at precisely the time he was due in that area.

Perhaps the most unscrupulous and deceptive reporting of the entire event occurred when newsmen misrepresented and misquoted the statements made by the Bay Pines Motel manager, when Frederick's girl friend asked at the reception desk if

there was a Valentich registered there. She was looking for the pilot's father, Guido Valentich. The press misquoted the facts and reported that she had asked for Frederick Valentich, the missing pilot. Consequently another twist appeared as a front page "scoop:" Ronda and friends were to have a rendezvous with the pilot. Some newsmen were busily engaged in trying to make the incident look like a hoax.

The facts are that the friends of Frederick Valentich, thinking a possibility existed that he might have turned back to Cape Otway, the nearest land to his last reported position, were there to search for him. The newspapers which published this false twist have editors who are of the Philip Klass, anti-UFO persuasion. They have never retracted this false report.

Another false twist to this baffling mystery was alleged suicide. Rumors were being circulated that Frederick was in financial difficulty and friction existed in the family. The precise opposite is true. Frederick Valentich had a savings account of \$2,500.00. Guido Valentich has experienced difficulty transferring his son's account to a term account which pays a higher interest rate. Guido Valentich still has hopes that his son will someday return.

When Frederick commenced his flying lessons, his parents did not favor him becoming a pilot because of the dangers involved. Apart from this original objection and the normal scoldings that I or any other father gives his sons at that age, no problem existed. The family was very close knit.

Suicide is ruled out because of outstanding reasons. Frederick was very fond of his girl-friend. He was keen to secure his commercial license. He had bought a new suit of clothes just prior to his disappearance. The same reasons apply to discount rumors that the aircraft had been stolen. If the pilot had stolen the plane for resale, he would have selected a more expensive one. Besides, he would have had to land the airplane after dark on a lighted runway.

No official admission has ever been made that either the Cessna and/or the UFO were detected by radar. It is a documented fact that hundreds of people reported dozens of UFOs during the same day and night. These reports flooded the telephones of Radio and TV Stations, newspaper desks, and VUFORS telephones. Witnesses have been located who observed a blue and white Cessna which matched the pilot's flight plan. Frederick Valentich was not the only person who reported a green light at the position where he vanished.

It is a known fact that officialdom insists there is no such thing as an unknown flying object. The Frederick Valentich case is still open. The last statement to come from official sources states: "The conclusion will probably be a flying accident due to an unknown cause."

(Based on Mr. Norman's talk at the 1982 MUFON UFO Symposium, July 2-4, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.)